

Hello, my name is Christa Roth and I am currently a senior taking the Horticulture class in the agriscience program at Nonnewaug High School. In addition, I am taking regular courses such as A.P. Biology, calculus, and A.P. English to prepare me for college. I commute daily from Danbury to Woodbury to attend school. Once I graduate from Nonnewaug High School next year, I plan to pursue a career in plant genetics in college.

The agriscience program at Nonnewaug is extremely beneficial to students and has helped me prepare for a future career. During class, we learn everything about numerous aspects of the horticulture industry from flower arranging to the cutting edge of plant science. The unique instruction in the horticulture class has taught me about different fields of study and also about common techniques used in each field. I know material that a freshman majoring in horticulture would be learning. It is the diversified curriculum of the classes that gets students so prepared for college and for the experience of a real job.

The FFA aspect of the program also tremendously helps students both in and out of school. The numerous competitive events and class activities greatly improved my public speaking and communication skills and raised my self-confidence. Because of this program, I was able to confidently participate on the Parliamentary Procedure and Floriculture career development events and even became a Chapter Officer this past year where I have the opportunity to lead the chapter and be a model student for others. I was even fortunate enough to go to the National FFA Convention in Indianapolis, Indiana.

The agriscience program has already helped so many students, including my sister who is currently a freshman attending Cornell University. The courses she took while

enrolled in the program, the career building and public speaking skills she learned through the agriscience program at Nonnewaug made her stand out while she was applying to colleges.

As you have seen, the Ellis Clark Regional Agriscience and Technology Program gives students a competitive and hands on experience in their field of interest. It has had a special role in my life, giving me the chance to explore new careers and even find something that I want to do for the rest of my life. In order so that more incoming students can be a part of and experience this amazing program for themselves, please include the ECS Task Force's School choice funding recommendations to increase agriscience funding in the Governor's Budget. Thank you.